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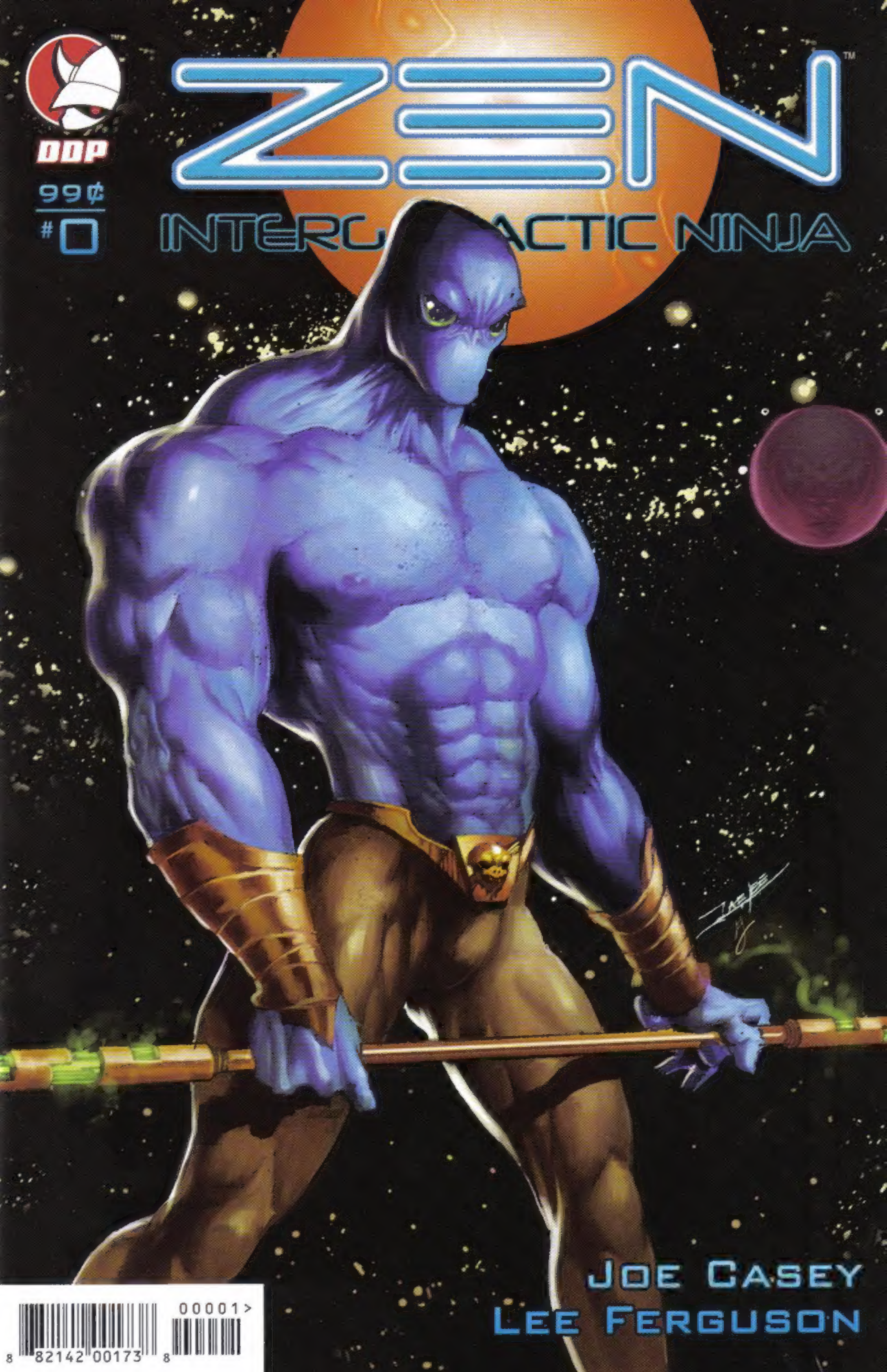
ZEN™

INTERGALACTIC NINJA



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JOE CASEY
LEE FERGUSON

DEVIL'S DUE PUBLISHING PRESENTS

ZEN™
INTERGALACTIC NINJA

CREATED BY STEVE STERN & DAN COTE

THE SMALL BLUE LIFEFORM, CREATED IN A TEST TUBE BY THE RACE OF BALTOONIANS, WAS DEEMED INFERIOR AND JETTISONED INTO THE VOID AS SO MUCH INCONSEQUENTIAL WASTE.

BUT THE POD IN WHICH IT CLUNG TO LIFE DRIFTED INTO THE GRAVITATIONAL FIELD OF THE PLANET OM, AND THERE THE CREATURE GREW TO MANHOOD UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF THE UNIVERSAL MASTERS WHO NAMED HIM ZEN. IN THEIR WISDOM, THE MASTERS SENT THEIR ADOPTED SON BACK INTO THE VOID FROM WHENCE HE HAD COME.

BOUNTY HUNTER, MERCENARY, SOLDIER — ZEN NOW CONTINUES HIS QUEST ACROSS SPACE AND TIME SO THAT, ONE DAY, HE MIGHT FIND HIS TRUE DESTINY. . . .

THE ALMIGHTY UNEXPECTED

WRITTEN BY JOE CASEY PENCILS BY LEE FERGUSON

COLORS BY FELIX SERRANO

COVER BY JAE LEE COVER COLORS BY LIZZY JOHN

LETTERS BY CRANK! EDITED BY CODY DEMATTEIS

DESIGN BY SEAN K. DOVE

SPECIAL THANKS TO ROBERT V. CONTE

BONUS STORY: "PRELUDE"

BY ROBERT V. CONTE AND CHRISTOPHER G. SCALF

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THE PLANET T'XAR-100 IN THE OUTER REACHES OF THE TWELFTH GALACTIC ARM.

FAR ENOUGH OUT WHERE CERTAIN LEGALITIES ARE MURKY AT BEST. ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO SMUGGLING OPS.

NOT A BAD HAUL THIS TIME...

...THINK THE DURILLIAM TANKS ARE FILLED TO CAPACITY.

THE BARON'S GOT PLENTY. HE'LL NEVER MISS IT. BETTER CHECK THE CORE TEMPS, THOUGH...

CONFIRM THAT.

IF ANYTHING, THE BARON WILL SIMPLY RECALIBRATE HIS--

THUNK!

EH? WAS THAT A JOKE? I THINK I MISSED THE PUNCH-LINE...

HEY! WHAT THE GAK ARE YOU DOING BACK THERE? NOT SKIMMING OFF THE TOP, I HOPE.

NOTHING LIKE KEEPING THINGS...

...HONEST.

OH DROOG...!

GOT ROOM FOR ONE MORE ON THIS BOAT...?

ZEN™ INTERGALACTIC NINJA

THE ALMIGHTY UNEXPECTED

BY CASEY, FERGUSON, & SERRANO

ZEN--?!

ZAKKK!

XAT!

ONBOARD INTRUDER!

WASTE THE PIKER--!

IF YOU DINKS FEEL THE NEED TO SWING, THEN BY ALL MEANS--

--BRING IT.

I COULD USE THE EXERCISE.

INCINERATE THE MACK--!

THEY'RE ALL BLUSTER AND SLOP.

IT'S ALL ABOUT FINESSE.

THE FLASH-BANG HAS THE DESIRED EFFECT--

THOOOM!!

--AND THE SMUGGLERS NEVER KNOW WHAT HIT THEM.

THUMP!

GUH--!

KRUT--!

I DID WHAT I CAME HERE TO DO.

HE'S HEADED FOR THE *ESCAPE POD BAY--!*

NOTHING HAPPENS BY ACCIDENT.

THIS ESCAPE POD HAS LIMITED PILOTING CONTROLS. JUST ENOUGH, THOUGH...

WE CAN'T LET THAT KRUNK GET AWAY!

YOU THINK THE *BARON* HIRED HIM?!

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THESE *DO?!* HOW CAN WE--

WHO *CARES* WHAT THEY DO?! JUST TARGET AND *FIRE--!*

INCOMING QUARK FIRE! RECOMMEND EVASIVE MANEUVERS--

EASIER SAID THAN DONE--

WHOOM!

CONTROLS ARE NON-RESPONSIVE--

-- NO DOUBT THEY'LL BE ABLE TO PICK ME OFF --

RECOMMENDATION: WORMHOLE TRANSIT SYSTEMS ACTIVE

THAT'S MY TICKET OUT--!

WORMHOLE TRANSIT: A TEAR IN SPACE-TIME! THE POD CAREENS INTO IT--

--AND ZEN HAS MADE HIS ESCAPE!

DOESN'T SEEM *REAL*, DOES IT? JUST A BUNCHA *NUTHIN'* OUT THERE...

...ALL EMPTY N' SHIZZ.

YOU SPACIN' OUT ON US, BIZ. WE GOTTA' *DISCUSS*--

--DIS IS THE *REAL DEAL*. WE *ALL* GONNA' MAKE A BANK ON DIS ONE. ALL YOU GOTTA' DO IS KEEP YER EYES *PEELED*.

I DUNNO, DREG. WHY YOU NEED *ME* FOR THIS? YOU GOT HOMIES *LINED UP* ALL OVER.

YEAH, BUT YOU KNOW THE *NUMBERS*, BIZ. I NEED YER *TALENTS*.

DIS AIN'T NO *INVITATION*. DIS IS A *WAKE-UP CALL*. DIS IS YER *FUTURE*. LOOK AROUND, YO...

...AIN'T NO WAY OUT BUT US.

THINK ABOUT IT.

WHATEVER.

NUTHIN' OUT THERE.

CONTINUED IN ZEN #1

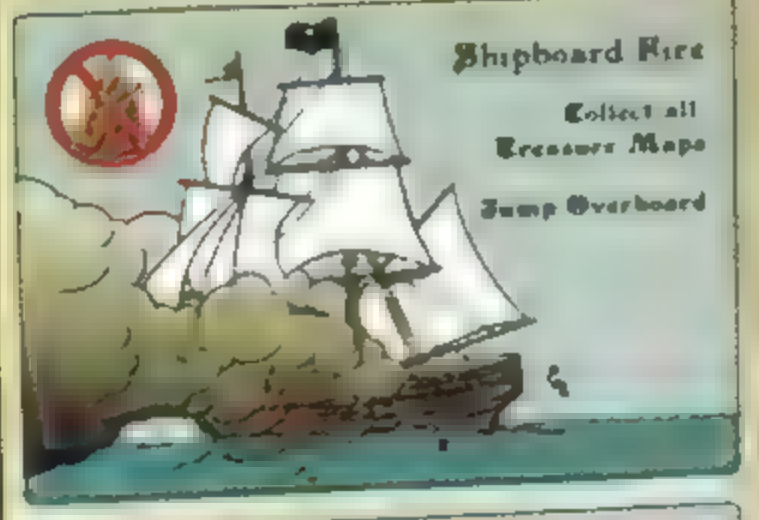
Pirate Safety & Emergency Procedures

Safety On Board

For your safety, do not remove this card from pirate ship

Spotting Drizzt Do'Urden

Evacuation Procedures



Shipboard Fire

Collect all Treasure Maps

Jump Overboard

Run Aground

Skewer Navigator Helmsman

Jump Overboard

Do Not Engage

Ebony skin
White hair

Green cloak
Twin scimitars

Huge, black panther

Purple eyes
Levitation

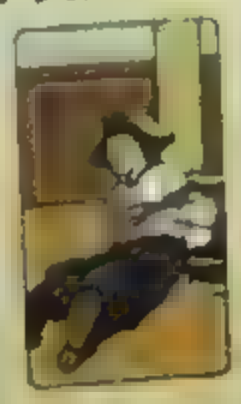
Think Before Goin' in the Drink

Do Not Leap Onto Sharp Rocks

Escape in Burning Longboats

Securing Captured Vessels

Replace Flag with Your Colors



Bash Former Captain to Mast

Secure all Booty and Swag

Eighteen pop tops
(may have loosened in boarding)

Scan Horizon for Pursuit

Lightning Bolts

Water Elementals

Fireballs

Sun Sprite

Unnatural Dangers on the Sword Coast

Know yer risks. Read fast.

Even the most dangerous pirates on the Sword Coast should beware when facing the likes of Drizzt Do'Urden. Following in the wake of *The New York Times* best-selling title, *The Orc King*, R.A. Salvatore plunges the dark elf and his friends into dangerous waters with *The Pirate King*.

Releases: October 7, 2008

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ZEN VS. NES

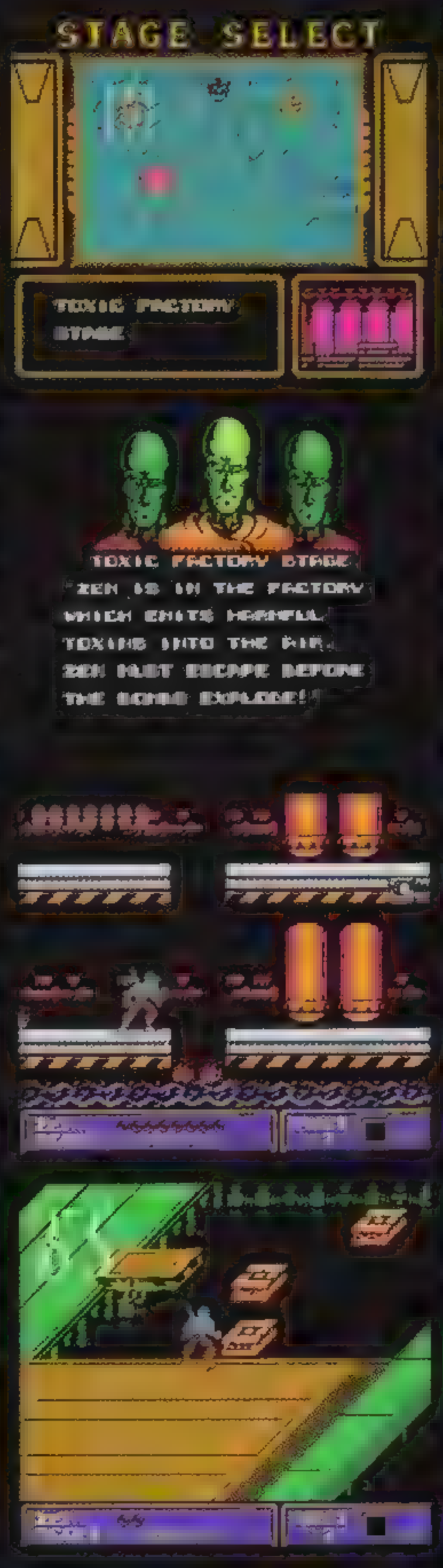
Sometime last year I was at lunch with Robert Conte and Josh Blaylock when the subject of Zen was brought up. Robert and I had spoken before about the possibility of DDP bringing the Intergalactic Ninja back to the printed page and I was excited that we were finally getting down to talking about the logistics of doing just that. You the reader can figure out how that all turned out. We've got this amazing #0 leading in to issue #1 coming in December as well as the classic Zen TPB that contains some of the best of Zen out following this issue to the stands very closely.

But just as we were finishing up the conversation, Robert mentioned that Zen was featured in a number of licensed products in the past and my eyes lit up when I heard of the various action figures that were available. I'd soon be hitting eBay and the various toy shops around Chicago to hunt some of these guys down. However when it was brought up that Zen also had his own Nintendo video game by Konami I got really anxious to pick this up and dig out my old NES.

That night I was actually able to get a hold of a copy of the game. I got it home and much to my dismay, this game is not one of the many that I had every aspect of it memorized my childhood. Apparently if you don't have 10 hours a day to devote to these older NES games, you can't just dive into it and expect to know exactly when to run, jump or attack.

There's an opening sequence where (you) Zen and a young boy are bearing witness to the pollutions tearing our world apart. It's then revealed that the cause of all of these crimes against nature can be blamed on one guy, Lord Contaminous. He's got his dirty fingers in all sorts of wrong doings around the globe and our mission is to visit them all and put an end to all this madness.

Right away the game gives you access to four very different levels: Toxic Factory, Forest, Off Shore Oil Rig and High Speed Railway. I tried them all pretty quickly as it was very easy to die in all of them.



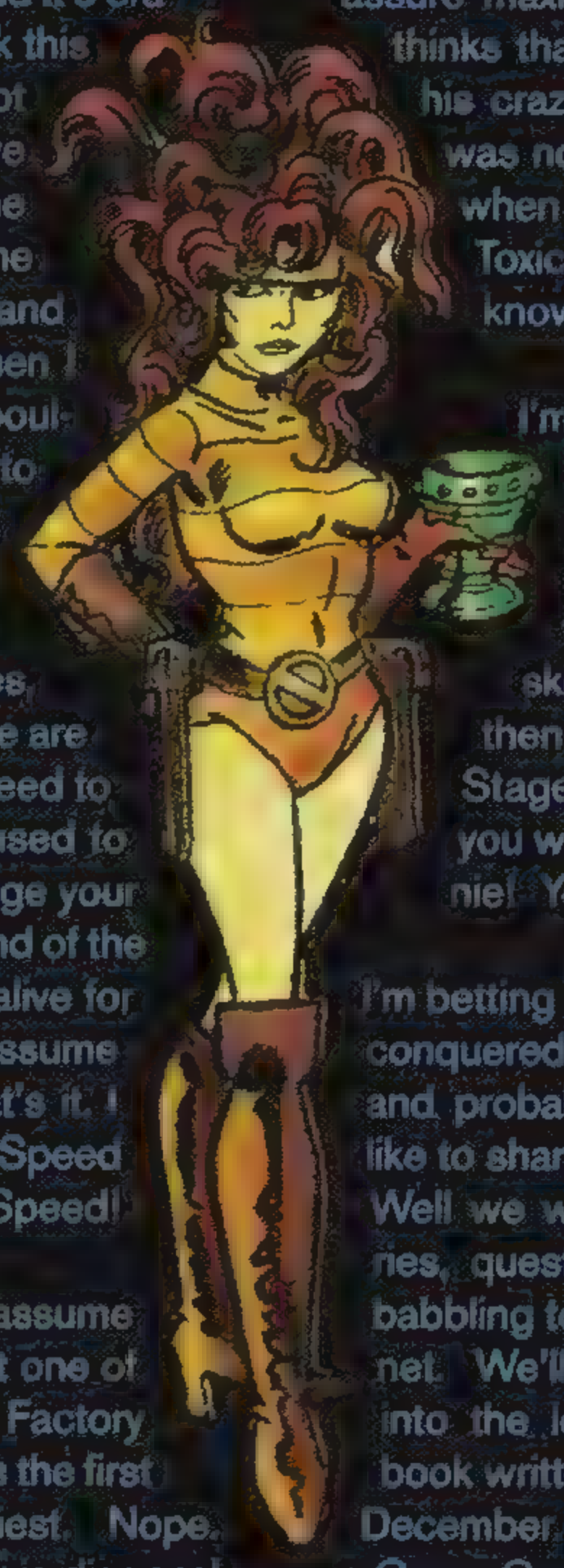
First off, the Forest Stage. All of the flowers are being destroyed by acid rain (the worst kind of rain if you ask me) and you need to revive them all. How do you do that? With your trusty Photon-stick of course! Sounds easy right? Nope, you have to run around the stage and strike them all before the first one you took care of goes limp again. But even after you've gotten that down you still have to worry about Sulfura. She's the attractive yet deadly foe waiting for you just above the tree line with a nasty grudge against Zen. Rating of Forest Stage: HARD.

Next me and Zen headed to the Off Shore Oil Rig Stage. Your objective here is to save all the silly humans that have gotten themselves trapped by an explosion and are hiding in rooms that use fire as doors. There's seven guys total. I saved a total of three. I was afraid there was a level after this one where you have to write letters to the rest of the families telling them how you failed at saving their loved ones. Luckily there wasn't. This level seemed like it'd be the first one that I could actually complete if I put a good week into training. It did take me a rather long time to figure out that you can climb along certain parts of the ceiling. Before figuring that out I dove right into certain death a few times. Rating of Off Shore Oil Rig Stage: Pretty Freaking Hard.

I figured a good way to get all the oil and smell of failure off of me was to air out Zen on the High Speed Railway Stage. In this stage you're supposed to be defending Earth by defeating the evil Garbageman and keeping him from spewing

his nuclear waste all over our environment. As far as I know, Garbageman is still currently spewing because I didn't stand much of a chance against this level and it's crazy diagonal scrolling. I did think this level was the most fun, you got a rail cart that you could move forward and backward in the screen while speeding down the track. You could also attack and jump which came in handy when I needed to jump directly into a boulder that was probably going to miss you completely had I just stayed on the track. However there are actual points where you need to jump to avoid holes, water and random rubble. There are enemies on the track that you need to hit, but attacking can also be used to hit the railway switches to change your course. I never made it to the end of the level, but I did manage to stay alive for quite some time, so I can only assume that I almost beat it. Yeah, that's it. I almost beat it. Rating for High Speed Railway Stage: Hard in Super-Speed!

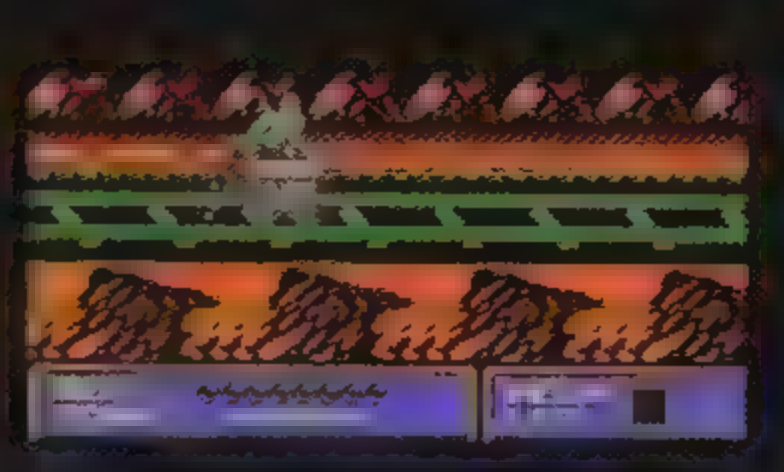
The last level that I played (I assume there's more if you actually beat one of the opening levels) is the Toxic Factory Stage. You'd think that since it's the first one listed that it'd be the easiest. Nope. Not at all. Again the game play is diagonal and to make things worse, you're expected to jump a lot from moving platforms, while robotic arms are shooting at you and random robots are shooting at you. Oh, I forgot to mention why Zen is forced to run through this level. We apparently thought it'd be a good idea to plant our explosives in this factory REALLY far from the exit. I'm sure it was planted at a certain point to assure maximum damage, but part of me thinks that Zen just wanted to show off his crazy-mad jumping skillz. Which I was not a really big help in executing when it came down to it. Rating for Toxic Factory Stage: Hardest level known to man.

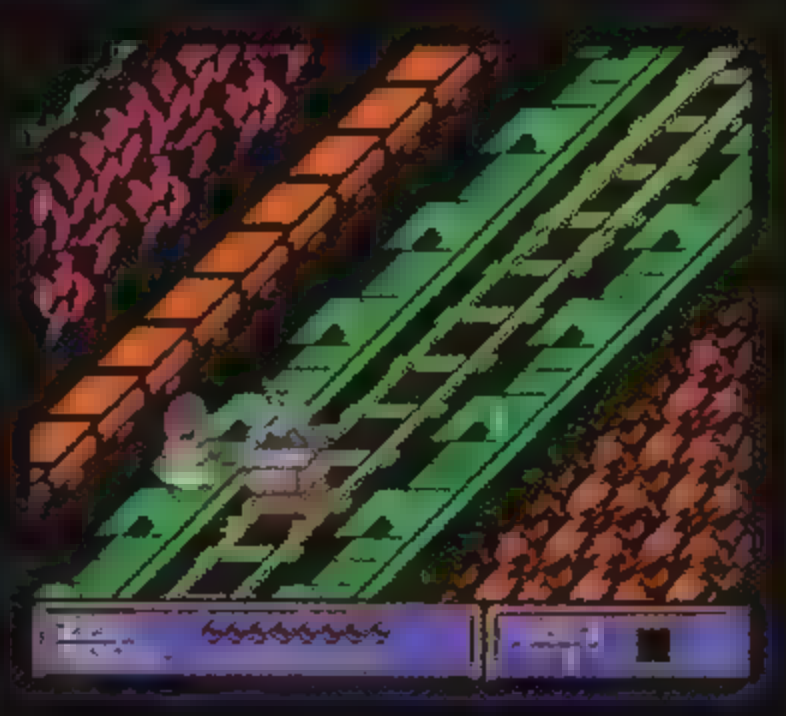


I'm pretty sure at this point that the only way I can get passed any of these levels is to take a couple weeks vacation and truly focus on my intergalactic skills. I should have it beaten by then. You hear that Toxic Factory Stage?! I'm not afraid of you! Just you wait until I find my old Game Genie! You're going down!

I'm betting that many of you Zen fans have conquered this so far impossible game and probably have stories of Zen you'd like to share with us, video game or other. Well we welcome anyone with Zen stories, questions, love notes and random babbling to write to us at zen@devilsdue.net. We'll try to get as many as we can into the letters pages of the new Zen book written by Joe Casey starting in December. Until then, someone find me a Game Genie!

-Sam Wells
2008





THE DEPTHS OF SPACE IN A GALAXY *UNKNOWN* TO MANKIND.

COUNTLESS *PLANETS*, *STARS* AND *SUNS* ILLUMINATE THE COSMOS IN THIS OTHERWISE PITCH-BLACK FRONTIER.

AMONG THESE ORBS LOOMS AN OBJECT TRAVELING HUNDREDS OF TIMES FASTER THAN THE SPEED OF LIGHT.

ALIEN TO THIS QUADRANT, THIS *SPEEDING MASS* IS NOT AN ASTEROID OR A COMET...

IT IS A *SPACESHIP.*

ZEN
INTERGALACTIC NINJA®
Created by Steve Stern and Dan Cote

PRELUDE

Written by ROBERT V. CONTE
Illustrated by CHRISTOPHER SCALF
Lettered by JAMES REDDINGTON

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THE HUMANOID LIFEFORM AT ITS HELM - ALSO *ALIEN* TO THIS REALM OF THE UNIVERSE- GUIDES HIS *MAMMOTH VESSEL* TOWARD ITS REMOTE DESTINATION...

COORDINATES INDICATE I'M ALMOST THERE

NINTH STAR SYSTEM IN THE FORTY-FIFTH QUADRANT OF GALAXY ELEVEN, SECTOR 7047010898.

IIHRRRRRRRR—T

DAMN! SHOULD HAVE TAKEN IN THE HYPERSHIP FOR AN *OVERHAUL* BEFORE I LEFT THE ETNOC SYSTEM. WON'T FIND MECHANOIDS THIS DEEP IN SPACE IF SHE BREAKS DOWN.

THIS JOB HAD BETTER BE *WORTH* IT. EL NOBUS' MEAGER DEPOSIT DOESN'T AMOUNT TO TEN PERCENT OF THE *AGGRAVATION* I'VE ALREADY DEALT WITH...

IF THAT *OVERBLOATED SYGOAT* WASN'T SO GREEDY, I'D HAVE CONVINCED MYSELF HE WAS TRYING TO GET ME *KILLED*.

THERE ARE TWO THINGS I *LOATHE* ABOUT BEING IN DEEP SPACE-

IT'S SO BADLY CHARTED, YOU'RE FLYING **BLIND** MOST OF THE TIME..

... AND IT'S **SO BORING**, YOU START THINKING ABOUT THE **PAST**-

"-AND, BOY, DO I *HATE* THE PAST..."

ALTHOUGH WE HAVE RAISED YOU AS OUR OWN, YOU MUST LEAVE **OM** NOW AND FOLLOW YOUR PATH.

I D-DON'T UNDERSTAND, MASTERS. I HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO *LEARN*-

DO NOT DISOBEY, ZEN-GO!

THOSE SELF-RIGHTEOUS MASTERS WERE NOT THE **FIRST** TO ABANDON ME, BUT THEY ARE DEFINITELY T HE *LAST*! WHO NEEDS THEM, ANYWAY?

BLEEP

HERE WE ARE --

--JERDOKK
I'LL BET EVEN THE SPACE SLUGS DIDN'T STAY TO RECOLONIZE WHAT'S LEFT OF THIS WAR-TORN PLANET

STILL
I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES--

--MY SPEARS SHOULD BE ENOUGH IF THERE'S TROUBLE

YEE-OCK!
I'LL NEVER GET USED TO THIS--LIKE WALKING INTO A BALL OF SLIME

"THIS IS WHERE THE FUN BEGINS—

"LET'S GO POD!"

ATMOSPHERE'S TH-THICK.

HEAD THROBBING.. HAVE TO M-MEDITATE..

PRESSURE'S M-WORSE THAN I EXPECTED..

BRING MY LEVELS DOWN-

-JUST LIKE THE MASTERS TAUGHT ME. AT LEAST THOSE RUBES WERE GOOD FOR SOMETHING...

JUST ONCE, I'D LIKE A **SOFT** LANDING...

KEEP **DREAMING**, ZEN. LEMME OUT OF HERE—!

UFF!!

BAD TRIP. WOOZY. GOT TO GO TO DEER..

...SLEEP.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE BEST OF ZEN VOL. 1 TPB
FROM DEVIL'S DUE PUBLISHING THIS NOVEMBER.
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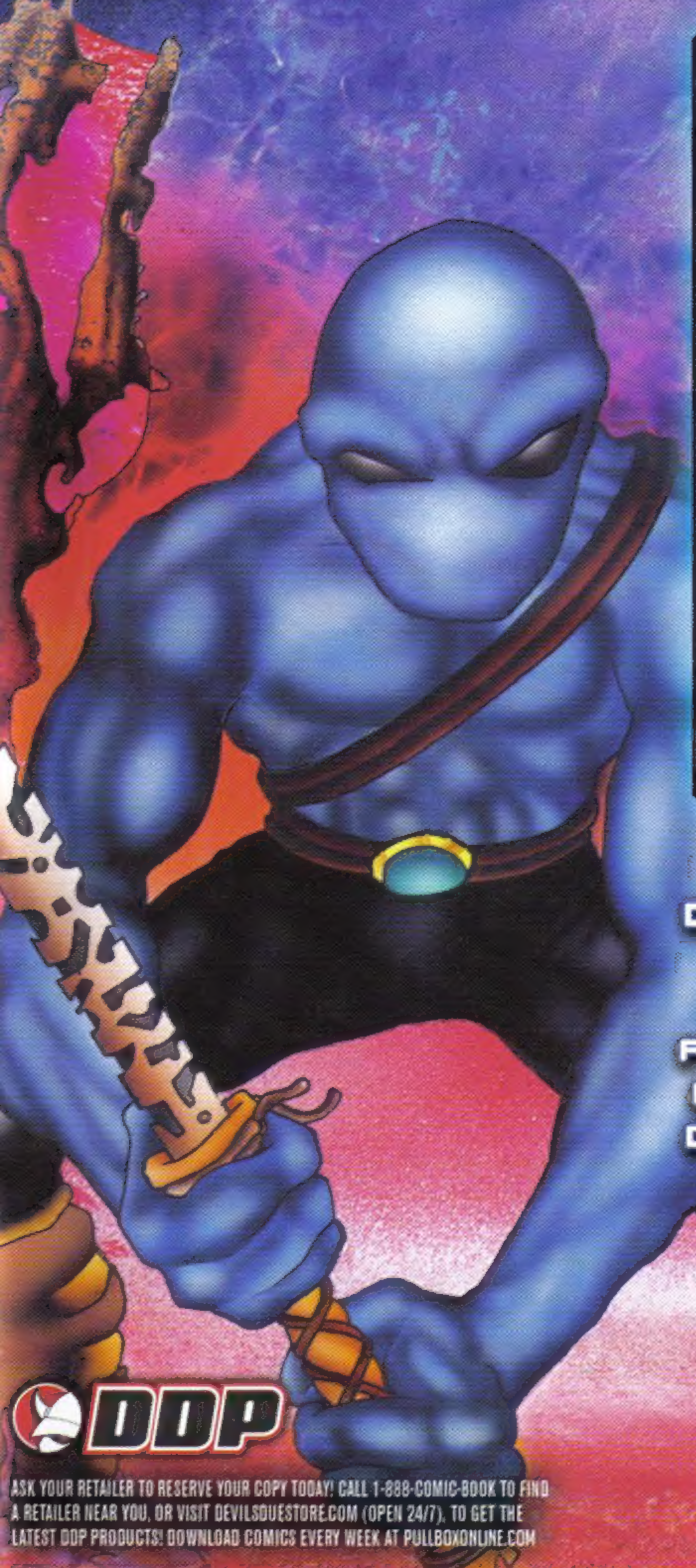
THE BEST OF ZEN INTERGALACTIC NINJA VOL. 1



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